

National Republican

W. J. MUNSON, Editor and Proprietor.

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THE REPUBLICAN HAS A LARGER CIRCULATION THAN ANY OTHER MORNING PAPER IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

WEEKLY BY MORNING. — DEC. 24, 1873.

TO THE PUBLIC.

The business office of THE REPUBLICAN for the present will continue at Tenth and D streets, at which place all persons having business relations with the paper will call. Due notice will be given of the removal of the business department to the new REPUBLICAN building.

THE NEW ERA IN SPAIN.

A careful examination of the official reports regarding the treatment of the captured passengers and crew of the Virginias by the Spanish authorities at Santiago presents numerous facts which are not calculated to increase one's admiration for the methods of administering justice which obtain under Volunteer rule. It seems that our naval officers found the prisoners who had not been executed confined in the common jail, and that they were not only suffering for food and clothing, but that their surroundings were wretched and filthy.

With commendable promptitude Commander Binck took steps to alleviate their condition, which were finally successful, and which included not only the unfortunate who were citizens of the United States, but those of other nationalities. But the infamy which attaches to the affair is to be found in the cruelty of the act of the butcher Burriel and his associates of the court-martial, in refusing to allow the prisoners the poor privilege of being represented by counsel. They even carried their prescriptive cruelty so far as to prohibit the American vice consul from making efforts to defend them. The sessions of the court were held in secret, and the accused were not even questioned during the trial—if such it may be called. In short, according to their own admissions, or, rather, the explanations of the successor of Burriel, the trials of the unfortunate victims were wicked pretences, without even the shadow of justice as a basis. The excuse for this extraordinary procedure, as given by Commandante General Morales de los Rios, was the discovery of an order issued by Captain General De Rodas. We have no authoritative explanation of the terms of this order, but we know that it was so execrably repulsive to the spirit of modern civilization that it was met by the most earnest and decided protest of both the Governments of Great Britain and the United States. But the protests were disregarded, and were complied with. The miserable victims were allowed but a few hours in which to make preparations for death.

We do not refer to these distressing facts for the purpose of renewing the excitement regarding the massacre, but to show that the present Government of Madrid is composed of a newer and better class of people than those who have won for the Spaniards a tacit name and character of vindictive blood-thirstiness. They belong to the new element of republicanism which is now steadily advancing in power throughout the Old World, and before which the old and oppressive forms of monarchical government tremble with frightened weakness. They are opposed by such wrecks as the Cure of Santa Cruz; but their faithful adherence to republicanism finds fitting elucidation in the steadfast support of the principles of Justice and reform of such men as Emilio Castelar. When information of the Santander massacre was conveyed to the latter he unhesitatingly joined with our Government in its denunciation of the act, and orders were accordingly issued suspending further executions. How faithfully these orders have been obeyed, notwithstanding the overwhelming influences brought to bear in opposition to them, the world now knows. Not only have the American prisoners been released, but those of other nationalities, including native Cubans, Spaniards, and deserters from the Spanish army. Here was a noble act. In defiance of a power known as the Volunteers of the island of Cuba—a power which has in its time ruled both the island and the home Government—Castelar asserted his authority as the President of the Spanish republic, and that authority has been obeyed. The success which attended his efforts has made him stronger as a leader than he had dreamed of being before. It fixed upon him and his associates a responsibility which they willingly accepted; but now that they have so faithfully fulfilled their difficult duty, they are assailed of unexpected and gratifying power. The evident and just deduction from this statement of the facts of the case is that with the disappearance of slavery in the Spanish dominion and the establishment of trade, republican governments the disregard of law and all moral obligations which has in the past tainted the Spanish character is disappearing. In behalf of humanity and civilized progress it is our duty to foster this newly-developed spirit. We must encourage its growth with every method at our command, even to the extent of a support of the authority of the home Government by moral and physical means of the miscreants on the island. To the reflective mind it is apparent that the successful execution of Castelar's orders for the delivery of the prisoners and the return of the Virginias was due in a great measure, to the determined character of our preparations for the dread alternative of war during the past few weeks. We have, in fact, acted as an ally of the Madrid Government, and so long as it comport itself as honestly and with such regard for the demands of justice as it has during that time, we cannot afford to act otherwise. In carrying out the evident obligation of our Government to do this thing, it may become necessary that we shall interfere with the sailing of future filibustering expeditions. However unpopular this duty may be in the present condition of the popular mind, it is nevertheless imposed upon us by our obligations to a sister republic. After all, it must be conceded that the sympathy of our people for the Cuban insurgents is a mere sentiment, which has been handed down from the days of Queen Isabella, when the islanders were subjected to impositions to the alleviation of which the republic is pledged.

NEW YORK AND NEW ORLEANS.

"Cheap transportation makes cheap bread" is a favorite axiom just now among the laborers of the Atlantic coast, and "high transportation makes low prices for grain."

It is an equally true saying with the farmers of the West. While both are true, it is a fact no less susceptible of demonstration

that the same rules apply to all other productions of the soil and of manufactures which require transportation in order to reach their markets of sale or exchange. The New Orleans *Republican* well says that "commerce has no fixed channels that it will not abandon at the exhibition of an improved way to market." The voyage of a ship of two thousand tons from the mouth of the Mississippi to New Orleans and back to the Gulf, amounting to \$4,750, together with the other charges of sixteen items, amounting to \$7.50 per bale upon cotton, place an embargo upon the shipment of that staple from the port which was formerly its greatest outlet. In effect these charges add two cents per pound to the cost of the article to the spinner. Their removal would enlarge the area of cotton lands which could profitably seek a market by that channel. Ports which would retain their commerce must keep pace with the progress of the age and the labor-saving inventions which cheapen the handling and transfer of property from one means of conveyance to another. Boston, Buffalo, Oswego and Chicago owe very much of their commercial advancement to the agency with which their merchants have adopted all improved facilities for the purpose. New York and New Orleans, together with nearly all other Atlantic seaports, have adhered to the old methods of handling property until they find their commerce either dwindling or falling behind in the race for supremacy. They can rely upon their superior natural advantages no longer. The works of art and invention must be applied to save them from utter defeat. It will not do to charge everything to the high rate of transportation on the railroads. The latter are forced by competition to accept the lowest paying prices. Freight will seek the cheapest routes to market as naturally as water will seek its level. Exorbitant charges and unnecessary expenses only add to the price which must be paid by the consumer, or detract from the profits of the producer. The laws of commerce are inexorable. Let New York and New Orleans meet these facts squarely and manfully. If they would retain their trade they must seek to remove from it those onerous burdens with which they have hitherto taxed it, and emulate their rivals in the effort to afford it an easy passage to its destiny.

The workmen of Philadelphia, the "laborers of the Republic," have been compelled by acts of which can only be characterized as set on against the peace and quiet of the community. Taking the law into their own hands, or rather making a law for themselves, they have attempted to force upon others rates of wages for labor. No one will dispute their privilege or right to demand such rates as they may deem proper for themselves, but the wickedness of the attempt to prevent others from obtaining labor at lower rates is apparent. It is this sad feature of the labor strike, just now of such frequent occurrence, which provokes the opposition of many thoughtful people to them. The laborers have as much to do with the strikes as the honest workingmen, and the blatant ringleaders, who spend their earnings in riotous living, have as much influence in bringing them about as the casual and ignorant man. It is not of the case that the strike is led by sympathetic laborers, but it is of the case that it is always the case that the men who have saved money from their hard earnings are called upon to defray the attendant expense.

But just now Philadelphia is not alone in her troubles on this account. The scarcity of money, and the stagnant condition of commerce, both results of the panic, and it may be added, the lack of confidence in Congress among the people, are beginning to show material results in every section of the country. In our own city we have, in a milder way, witnessed indications of this general disturbance. The poverty which has suddenly overtaken so many of our people has driven them to desperation. The relatives and friends of the family are taking the law into their own hands, and have attempted to force upon others rates of wages for labor. No one will dispute their privilege or right to demand such rates as they may deem proper for themselves, but the wickedness of the attempt to prevent others from obtaining labor at lower rates is apparent. It is this sad feature of the labor strike, just now of such frequent occurrence, which provokes the opposition of many thoughtful people to them. The laborers have as much to do with the strikes as the honest workingmen, and the blatant ringleaders, who spend their earnings in riotous living, have as much influence in bringing them about as the casual and ignorant man. It is not of the case that the strike is led by sympathetic laborers, but it is of the case that it is always the case that the men who have saved money from their hard earnings are called upon to defray the attendant expense.

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